

February is the shortest month of the year, the only month with less than 30 days, and the only month that doesn't always have the same number of days every year. In February we celebrate love on Valentine's Day, commemorate our U.S. Presidents on President's Day, and hold our breath while the Utah State Legislature is in session!

Because all cities and towns in Utah are creatures of the state, every session has bills introduced that impact our city in one way or another. Murray City works very closely with the Utah League of Cities and Towns (ULCT) each year to lobby the legislature and encourage legislation that strengthens local control and the ability of local elected officials to make decisions about local issues that impact our residents. We, along with our fellow ULCT members, strongly oppose state laws that undermine local government. The Executive Director of ULCT, Cameron Diehl, is a local Murray boy! Cameron was part of the Murray City Youth Government in 1999-2000, and we value the wonderful relationship and benefit from his love of his hometown. I agree with the mantra that he reminds us of often, that "government closest to the people governs best."

As a city, we also enjoy very positive working relationships with the State Senators and Representatives who represent Murray. We remain in constant contact with them throughout the legislative session. I encourage all Murray citizens to learn who represents them, both at the State Capitol and at Murray City Hall. Visit le.utah.gov/GIS/ to find your State Legislators and murray.utah.gov/683/Council-Members for your city council members.

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President's Day was originally established in 1885 in recognition of our first president, George Washington, and was celebrated on February 22, which was Washington's birthday. In 1971 President's Day was moved to the third Monday in February and we now celebrate all presidents, past and present. As we approach President's Day this year, I have reflected on some of the quotes of past presidents, and how they may be relevant to my term as mayor of Murray City. Here are a few of these quotes:

"It is better to offer no excuse than a bad one." – George Washington

"I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past." – Thomas Jefferson

"Don't worry when you are not recognized, but strive to be worthy of recognition." - Abraham Lincoln

"In a time of domestic crisis, men of goodwill and generosity should be able to unite regardless of party or politics." – John F. Kennedy

"Government's first duty is to protect the people, not run their lives." – Ronald Reagan

"We all do better when we work together. Our differences do matter, but our common humanity matters most." – Bill Clinton

Regardless of political party, religious affiliation, or economic background, every one of our former presidents has had at least one thing in common: All were human, each with his own strengths as well as weaknesses. Each contributed in their own unique way. As we commemorate President's Day, let's learn from the wisdom of those who held the office, rather than reflect on their human weaknesses.